

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AGR-05 SP-02 AID-05 NSC-05

CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 COME-00 CU-02 L-03

OES-03 /082 W

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R 221127Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 599

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAGR, EGEN, CVIS, SCUL, BU

SUBJECT: AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION WITH BULGARIA: THE US-PROPOSED
"STATEMENT" AND INVITATION TO GOB SPECIALISTS

REF: (A) STATE 295028; (B) STATE 294591;

(C) STATE 243350; (D) STATE 280477; (E) SOFIA 2675;

(F) SOFIA 2721.

1. WE HAVE NO TROUBLE WITH WAITING TO SEE HOW THE BULGARIANS REACT TO OUR PROPOSED CULTURAL/TECHNICAL/SCIENTIFIC AGREEMENT BEFORE PROCEEDING FURTHER ON THE AGRICULTURAL STATEMENT AND THE FORMAL INVITATION FOR BULGARIAN EXPERTS TO COME TO THE US. FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV HAS SAID WE WOULD HEAR FROM THE GOB ON THE CULTURAL AGREEMENT BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR. ASSUMING THAT THEIR RESPONSE IS MODERATELY FORTHCOMING, WE SHOULD THEN PROCEED WITH INVITATION TO THE BULGARIAN AGRICULTURAL EXPERTS.

2. WE ALSO HAVE NO TROUBLE WITH THE STATEMENT IN REF B THAT THE JOINT STATEMENT ON AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION WOULD HAVE TO BE NARROWER IN SCOPE THAN THE ROMANIAN AND POLISH MODELS. IN FACT, WE BELIEVE CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT THE EXPERTS WHOM THE BULGARIANS ARE NOW PREPARED

TO SEND TO THE US WOULD FALL IN WITH THE FORMAT AND CONTENT ENVISAGED IN PARA 3 REF B, ALTHOUGH THEY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY TRY TO GET MORE. BUT THERE IS ENOUGH GROUND FOR MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COOPERATION TO JUSTIFY THE NEGOTIATION OF SUCH A STATEMENT.

3. IF, HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE THE VIEW IN WASHINGTON THAT THE VISIT OF THE BULGARIAN EXPERTS AND THE CONCLUSION OF THE "STATEMENT" CAN BE INDEFINITELY POST-PONED, WE WOULD BE VERY SERIOUSLY CONCERNED. AS STATE AND AGRICULTURE ARE AWARE, THIS MATTER GOES BACK TO AN INITIATIVE OF UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE CAMPBELL WHEN HE WAS HERE IN MAY, 1975. I ALSO HAD OCCASION TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH SECRETARY BUTZ WHEN I SAW HIM IN WASHINGTON JUST AFTER THE CAMPBELL VISIT, AND HE CONFIRMED WHAT CAMPBELL HAD SAID HERE. SUBSEQUENTLY THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE, THE MOST SENIOR US DIPLOMATIC OFFICIAL TO VISIT BULGARIA, INFORMED FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV IN SEPTEMBER THAT USG STOOD READY TO INVITE BULGARIAN EXPERTS TO DISCUSS THE AGRICULTURAL STATEMENT. IN FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATION IN WASHINGTON OCTOBER 9 (REF C), THE DEPUTY SECRETARY ONCE AGAIN "EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO RECEIVE BULGARIAN EXPERTS TO DISCUSS AND NEGOTIATE TEXT." BECAUSE WE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE (REF D) THAT BUREAUCRATIC PETTIFOGLERY HERE WAS DELAYING A RESPONSE, I RAISED THE MATTER WITH MLADENOV ON DECEMBER 6, REITERATING THE US POSITION THAT WE STOOD READY TO RECEIVE THE BULGARIAN EXPERTS. AS REPORTED REF E, MLADENOV INSTRUCTED HIS STAFF TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENT FOR DCM TO SEE FIRST VICE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE TONEV AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE TO BREAK THE LOG-JAM. THAT MEETING TOOK PLACE DEC 11 AND CONCLUDED WITH TONEV SAYING (REF F) THAT GOB HAD NO PROBLEM WITH THE IDEA OF A STATEMENT RATHER THAN AGREEMENT AND THAT HE SAW NO REASON WHY ACTION COULD NOT BE TAKEN EXPEDITIOUSLY. (REF A WAS RECEIVED HERE FOUR DAYS AFTER DISPATCH OF REF F.)

4. IN LIGHT OF THIS RECORD IT WOULD BE VERY DAMAGING
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IF WE WERE TO DISOWN THE SUCCESSIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT OUR DESIRE OR WILLINGNESS TO RECEIVE BULGARIAN EXPERTS AND TO CONCLUDE A JOINT "STATEMENT". THEREFORE, WHILE A SLIGHT DELAY IN THIS MATTER WILL NOT MATTER VERY MUCH, WE TRUST THAT STATE AND AGRICULTURE ARE IN AGREEMENT THAT A FORMAL INVITATION TO THE GOB TO SEND THESE EXPERTS SHOULD BE SENT IN EARLY JANUARY, ASSUMING THAT THE BULGARIAN RESPONSE TO OUR CULTURAL AGREEMENT

DRAFT SHOWS THAT THEY ARE NOT RAISING INSUPERABLE OBSTACLES, WHICH WE DO NOT EXPECT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT STATE AND AGRICULTURE COORDINATE INVITATION AS PER LAST PARA REF F, TO BE ISSUED AS SOON AS STATE GIVES THE GREEN LIGHT AFTER ASSESSMENT OF THE IMMINENT BULGARIAN REPLY TO OUR CULTURAL AGREEMENT DRAFT. ANY UNREASONABLE DELAY WOULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD HERE AND WOULD, AS A MATTER OF FACT, BE IMPOSSIBLE TO EXPLAIN; ALTHOUGH, AS INDICATED INITIALLY, A SHORT DELAY OF ANOTHER TWO WEEKS OR SO WILL NOT AFFECT OUR RELATIONS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, CULTURAL EXCHANGE AGREEMENTS, AGRICULTURAL AGREEMENTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, INVITATIONS, CONSULTANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SOFIA02775
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750444-0104
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751218/aaaaapzk.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 295028, 75 STATE 294591
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <09 JUL 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION WITH BULGARIA: THE US-PROPOSED "STATEMENT" AND INVITATION TO GOB SPECIALISTS
TAGS: EAGR, EGEN, CVIS, SCUL, BU, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006